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WOLFE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS #175**

OK

CHICAGO OUTLET
(**11:30 - 12:30 P.M.**)

(**NOVEMBER 29, 1955**)

(**FRIDAY**)
DAY

PRODUCTION

ANNOUNCER

ENGINEER

REMARKS

ANNOUNCER: The United States Forest Service is now compiling figures on the recreational use of the National Forests for 1935 which it is believed will show the largest number of visitors this year that the National Forests ever had. Last year, counting transients and those just riding through to enjoy the scenery as well as those making more extended visits, there were more than 38 million people visited the National Forests. Campers and picnickers, hunters and fishermen, hikers and motorists, camera enthusiasts and nature lovers, they came in vast numbers to enjoy the abundant recreational opportunities of these forest playgrounds - and there would have been plenty of room for more. So widely extended and varied in topography is our National Forest system that those who like solitude can always find opportunity to get off the beaten track and enjoy nature's wonders in their own way. In many of the National Forests there are vast stretches of wilderness country or primitive areas where one properly equipped for such an adventure can travel for days without the slightest contact with the activities or works of man. Entrance to the National Forests is without charge, and there are only a few simple, common-sense regulations which the visitor is asked to observe, looking to sanitation and the prevention of fire, and the protection of public property.

Well, now to the Pine Cove Ranger Station - and this time we are going to listen in again on Ranger Jim Robbins and the rest of the folks while they are spending a quiet evening at home. Maybe we'll catch Jim in a story-telling mood. Here's hoping -

JIM: Hmm. Fire looks nice and cheerful, don't she? (CHUCKLES)
If we didn't have company, Bess, I s pe ct I'd take off my boots.

BESS: Mary isn't company, Jim. She's just like one of the family.

MARY: Oh, he knows I don't want to be company, Mrs. Robbins. Ha's
just joking. -- Please take them off, Mr. Robbins. Here, you
can put your feet on this stool, right up close to the fire --
Like that -- see?

JIM: Guess I will. Got the old feet kinda cold and wet today, up
in the high country. There's quite a bit of snow up there
already, in spots. -- (GRUNTS) Hmm. Hope I haven't got a
hole in my sock.

(SOUND OF DOOR)

BESS: Oh, there's Jerry with another armload of wood.

JERRY: (COMING UP) Yeah. (SOUND OF DUMPING WOOD BY FIREPLACE) There's
that ought to keep the home-fires burning a-while.

BESS: That's fine, Jerry. Thanks.

JERRY: Now -- me for an easy chair.

MARY: You look sort of tired tonight, Jerry.

JERRY: I guess I am - kinda. No wonder, after reavelling around with
those bundles of tools all day.

MARY: What were you doing, Jerry?

JERRY: Oh, working out in the equipment shed - checking the fire tools
and everything. -- Say, Jim, remember when I first came to the
job up here?

JIM: Yep. Almost four years ago - wasn't it?

JERRY: Yeah. Remember? I came up here full of a lot of romantic ideas about being a Forest Ranger riding around in the great open spaces and all that, and the first job you put me on was scraping the rust off of fire tools. That's all I did for a whole week. I thought I'd never want to look a snowed in the face again.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) I guess it didn't do you any harm.

JERRY: I should say not. I guess I've learned a little bit since then.

JIM: I reckon so. And you'll keep on learning. You and me both. You've got to keep on learning things on this ranger job. When you get so you can't learn any more - can't profit by experience or learn better ways of doing things, you're not much use to the Forest Service any more.

JERRY: I know that, all right.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) I guess you had the same idea a lot of young fellows have about this forest ranger job -- you thought all you'd have to do would be to flit around the hills, carefree as a young antelope.

JERRY: (LAUGHING) Well, I've found out you have to flit around like an antelope all right, sometimes, but hardly as carefree.

JIM: Wops.

MARY: Mr. Robbins, I've never seen an antelope.

JIM: Haven't you, Mary? Well, you've got a pretty sight coming to you. — You know, in the early days there used to be lots of antelope, when the pioneers first settled this western country. But it wasn't long before they became a pretty scarce article. This country was blessed with the most wonderful wildlife resources of any place on the globe, but we demonstrated our great American efficiency by almost wiping 'em out in record time. The Forest Service has been trying to tell this country for thirty years that you can't keep killing off your game indefinitely, any more than you can keep cutting down trees forever without growing new ones.

MARY: It's the same old story about killing the geese that laid the golden eggs.

JIM: Yes. Exactly. — Anyway, we're still got some of the remnants of our old antelope herds on our National Forests, and the Forest Service is trying to look after 'em and build 'em up gradually. We're handicapped in a lot of ways — lack of enough suitable range and so on — but I reckon we're doing pretty fair — our last game estimates showed an increase of almost 300 antelope in the National Forests. We've got over 15,000 of 'em altogether, now.

MARY: Tell me more about them.

JIM: Well, I guess one of the prettiest sights I've ever seen was a herd of antelope down on the Coconino (pr. Koko-nee'no) National Forest in Arizona. I was riding along with Ed Miller in his flivver -- Ed Miller used to be Supervisor of the Coconino before they moved him into the regional office at Albuquerque a little while back -- mighty fine fellow, too. Ed Miller. Anyway, we were chugging along across a big open plain when we came in sight of a herd of antelope -- about 18 or 20 of 'em, I reckon -- about half a mile away. They ran along quite a ways, a little ahead of us and to the right and then they crossed over in front of us and started back on our left. The antelope has big white rump-patches, -- white as snow -- and I tell you it was something to see -- those pretty little animals with their snow-white patches bounding along over the plain.

BESS: Oh, they are a beautiful sight, Mary. I've seen them many times.

MARY: I know they must be.

JIM: Well, the best of all was when they got over to the left of us. They came up on the crest of a little rise and ran along there a spell, strung out in single file, right on top of the crest, silhouetted against the sky.

MARY: That must have been marvelous. I wish I could have been there.

JIM: Yep. Too bad you couldn't have. -- Ed Miller stopped the car so we could watch 'em, and pretty soon the buck antelope leading the herd stopped and all of 'em stopped to look at us. They stood there, against the sky, watching us several minutes, and finally I guess they figured we didn't look as pretty to them as they looked to us, so they took out again and disappeared over the crest. -- We sighted another small herd a little while later, but they were too far away to see very well.

JERRY: Could you keep up with 'em in the car, Jim, so as to check on the speedometer and see how fast they were running.

JIM: We might've on a smooth road, Jerry, but where we were was all lava boulders, and what passed for a road was nothing but a sort of a trail that wound around and missed the biggest of 'em. The way Ed tore over that road though, after he sighted those antelope, he must've thought he was on a concrete highway. The only time I ever touched the seat of the car was when I hit it now and then between bounces.

JERRY: Maybe it's just as well they haven't got a lot of good roads in there or people would be coming in in droves and run the poor antelopes to death.

JIM: Yep. The boys have some trouble now and then with poachers, shooting antelope from their cars - which to my way of thinking is pretty poor sportsmanship.

JERRY: I'll say.

JIM: All the roads on the Coconino aren't like that, though we've got some fine roads down there too -- one of the transcontinental highways runs right across the Forest and the Santa Fe railroad runs through Flagstaff, where the headquarters are, so if anybody wants to see some real country, it ain't hard to get to.

MARY: What is the Coconino National Forest like?

JIM: Well, most of the Forest lies on a high plateau, with a good stand of ponderosa pine timber covering it. The pine forests in that country are open stands -- you can see around in 'em or walk around without getting tangled up in any brush -- but they grow fine timber. Some parts of it were cut pretty clean in the old days, but since the National Forest was established it's coming back, and the boys figure that with good Forest management, the Coconino can furnish a lot of good wood to 50 million feet of timber a year, and keep doing it forever. That means steady industry and steady employment for a lot of men, and sound community life. Because the Forest Service won't let the timber be cut off the National Forest any faster than it grows. -- Well, down there's lots of good range land on the Coconino, and the Forest Service handles some 100,000 to 120,000 head of cattle and 70,000 head of sheep. And the forage is handled like the timber -- don't cut down on it more than we're looking after the wildlife -- besides our herds there's a lot of deer, and we've got a big range for wild turkeys on the Forest.

JERRY: Where did they get the name "Coconino"?

JIM: That was the name of an Indian tribe in those parts - neighbors of the Hopis. The Coconino, by the way, has lots of historical interest. The Spanish explorer Cardenas journeyed over it in 1540, and the "forty-niners" traveled across it in their quest for California gold. And you'll find lots of evidence of a prehistoric race scattered over the Forest. Like in Walnut Canyon, about 10 miles east of Flagstaff, there's some famous cliff dwellings. You get to 'em by a short foot trail from the ranger station, and there's ladders fixed up there so you can go all over 'em. There's about 30 structures altogether, all one-family dwellings, they say. I s'pect there were some pretty large families 'cause some of 'em have six or eight rooms. The overhanging limestone cliffs protect them so well that they're well preserved - you can see the remains of their little fire pits inside the rooms, and lots of other little things that give you a picture of how the cliff dwellers lived.

MARY: Oh, I'd love to see them.

JIM: Well, there's others too. Down in the southern end of the forest there's Montezuma Castle. That's a beautiful cliff dwelling. And along the same road there's a place called Montezuma Well that's interesting - but the land around there is privately owned and the owner charges folks something to get in and see it.

JERRY: What's this "Sunset Mountain" I've heard about, Jim? That's that on the Coconino?

JIM: Yep. That's an interesting place too. It's a volcanic lava cone and they call it "Sunset Mountain" because the deposits of sulphur around the rim are so colorful that it looks like the glow of sunset. There's fields of lava and cinders around there and lots of other interesting volcanic formations. Then there's little caves in the lava beds where you can always find ice, even on the hottest summer days.

MARY: Tell us some more about Coconino, Mr. Robbins, - won't you?

JIM: Well, I reckon there's plenty to tell, - if I can remember it all.

JERRY: We'd better have another stick on the fire, hadn't we, Mrs. Robbins?

SASS: Yes, - please, Jerry. You've got Jim started now, and he's liable to talk all night.

MARY: Oh, I hope he does.

JERRY: Well, I'll keep the fire going (SCENE OF CAMPING LOG ON FIRE IN CAMP AS SASS

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Maybe I will. You've got me going on an interesting subject, all right. I spent some mighty interesting days on the Coconino. -- Let's see -- I guess I haven't mentioned the most conspicuous thing on the Forest - the San Francisco Peaks. You can see 'em for miles around. They're a series of extinct volcanic mountains, and Humphrey's Peak, the highest of 'em is over twelve thousand feet, if I remember right. Anybody around there will tell you you can get the finest view in the Southwest from San Francisco Peaks. There's a scenic boulevard that goes part way up on the north side, and there's a good horse trail up from the pine-covered plateau, through the spruce and fir to the top above timberline on the south side. -- Then, for a different kind of scenery, there's Lake Mary, and Mormon Lake - that's the largest natural lake in Arizona - and then there's Oak Creek Canyon, and it's a mighty pretty place, too. The Forest Service has fixed up some nice camping and picnic grounds there. -- But speaking of views, -- I've seen some mighty wonderful views in my day - working around the forests like I have - but one of the views I've got tucked away in my memory that gives me a thrill every time I think of it, is down along the southern edge of the Coconino National Forest. I'm going back and see it again when I get a chance.

MARY: Oh, tell us about it, Mr. Robbins.

JIM: Well, you know, the Coconino plateau breaks off with a sharp rim down in the southern part of the Forest. You come along through the pine forest and all of a sudden you come out on the edge of the rim, and you look out over a wide valley that's as colorful as a painting -- and all around you are the breaks and cliffs of the rim -- sheer cliffs, colored like the rainbow -- I guess I ain't very good at describing things, but it's a sight worth seeing, I'll tell you. It takes your breath away.

MARY: Oh, I wish I could see it!

JIM: Well, compared to the number of folks that've seen places like the Grand Canyon and the like, few people have -- but it's not hard to get to. The Forest Service has built a road that takes you to the edge of the rim, and right down the face of it.

JERRY: We'll go there some day, Mary.

JIM: They've built a lot of good road on the Coconino in the last few years, and folks can get around over some parts of the Forest pretty easy, but there's still plenty of places where there's no chance of whizzing by too fast to see the scenery. -- (GENTLY) You know they tell me about one of our road construction superintendents who was working with a crew of men fixing up one of our forest roads -- and he didn't want any of the boys to get bumped, so he put up a sign that said "Go slow -- Men at Work." But the autos kept right on whizzing by without glancing up or down. Finally, Bill got a bright idea, so he took down the sign that said "Go slow -- Men at Work" and put up another one that said "Go slow -- Girls at Play." After that he didn't have any trouble. Every auto slowed down to a snail's pace -- and a lot of the cars with men in 'em even stopped.

(LAUGHTER - FADEOUT)

ANNOUNCER: Well, maybe we'd have stopped too, in a case like that. We're not telling. But anyway, we've learned some interesting things about the Coconino National Forest today, and maybe some day soon we'll get Ranger Jim to telling about some of those other National Forests you'd like to hear about.

Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers is presented by the National Broadcasting Company, with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service.

LMC/ 10:40 A.M.
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